



Photo by Dennis Carlson

DTRA presented Joint Meritorious Unit Award

Defense Threat Reduction Agency Chief of Staff Ronnie Faircloth and Assistant Chief of Staff for Albuquerque Jim Tritten affix the Joint Meritorious Unit Award

streamer on the DTRA flag held by Senior Enlisted Advisor Chief Master Sgt. Valerie Jackson at the Agency's fifth Anniversary Ceremony held at Kirtland AFB, Oct. 24.

AAFES fuel, traffic flow hot commander's call queries

BY JENNIFER E. WEST

377th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

Gas prices, accessibility and traffic around the AAFES pumps, adding diesel as a customer option and who buys gas on the base were the basis of many questions posed to Col. Hank Andrews, the 377th Air Base Wing commander, during his Oct. 31 Commander's Call for the wing's DOD civilians.

Runner-up for concern expressed by civilians was traffic flow around the base post office and near the Eubank Gate.

"This hour-long (Commander's Call) session is intended for your benefit, so my intent is to hopefully focus on the things that are on your minds," Andrews said in his opening remarks, before fielding a range of questions relating to utilities privatization, physical training policy for civilians, the Rio Grande Community Center usage and the future of outsourcing in relation to DOD civilian personnel.

The fuel questions, Andrews assured the audience, would be studied with the help of the general manager of AAFES.

The concerns expressed by the

audience reflected the similarity of the base community to any small American town—not insurmountable but troublesome to its residents.

Jobs?

Who do you call about jobs? Andrews promised an accessible directory of "CPO" in the near future to help civilians find their way through the maze of departments in the Civilian Personnel Office.

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Post Office

What about the traffic problem around the Post Office and the Eubank Gate? Wayne Ragan, Safety Office chief, said, "Traffic flow around the Post Office continues to be a problem as evidenced by several comments in the audience."

Following the Commander's Call and at the suggestion of Andrews, Ragan reported that the Safety Office and the Civil Engineers are already

looking at the traffic flow to determine a better way to route traffic.

"At Col. Andrews' direction, the look will disregard existing parking conditions," Ragan said. "We're starting with a clean slate."

Eubank Gate

Along with a safer, more customer-friendly traffic routing at the Post Office is the traffic flow at the Eubank Gate. People's concerns center around vehicles entering the gate through the left lane and immediately making right turns to either drive straight or to turn into one of the many agencies located on the right side of that thoroughfare.

"Security forces and Civil Engineers are also looking at traffic patterns there and will determine how to divide the lanes better to prevent drivers from being cut off after entering the gate," Ragan added.

Manzano dip

The Manzano Bridge roadway has had a deep dip that has caused drivers concern. That dip, Andrews also reported, has been temporarily filled.

And, Andrews further noted, the Civil Engineers, in conjunction with the Corps of Engineers, are "pursuing warranty work and a permanent fix to the dip."

While some audience questions, like the traffic and bridge concerns, required input to the commander from specific unit representatives to expedite solutions, Andrews listened intently, taking note of each concern and pledging his attention to resolving the issues.

South Gate thanks

The session was not all complaint or concern. The South Gate reopening mentioned by one attendee prompted "thanks" and applause for Andrews' decision to open the gate closed after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks caused heightened security for the installation.

Not all concerns were resolvable or answerable in a nutshell at the session. A question about Base Realignment and Closure prompted the commander to refer to his Oct. 24 Nucleus article that reiterated the need to avoid entanglement in rumors of BRAC plans and which detailed the factors DOD considers in the BRAC process.



NUCLEUS

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Photo by Todd Berenger

Honorary commanders

TEAM KIRTLAND’s honorary commanders visited with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and experienced what the Trestle (pictured here) is all about Oct 24. Honorary commanders, along with some of the installation’s commanders, stand on the massive structure which was once used to test electronic wave effects on aircraft and ground equipment.

Keeping a wary eye on space storms

BY JOHN BROWNLEE
Space Vehicles Directorate Public Affairs

HANSCOM AFB, Mass.—If you plan to orbit the Earth this week, be sure to pack plenty of sunscreen. Two whopping solar flares—among recorded history’s worst 20—have blasted the Earth’s protective magnetosphere with potent clouds of solar radiation and energized particles from the sun, leaving in their wake the potential for fried satellites and scrambled circuits on the ground.

Not good news for electronically-dependant military and civilian communication operations.

But instead of merely complaining about this “weather” in space, solar physicists at the Air Force Research Laboratory’s Space Weather Center of Excellence outside Boston are actually doing something about it. And they rely on one of their most recent space-based tools, the Solar Mass Ejection Imager, to track the sun’s activity.

Also known as coronal mass ejections, or CMEs, solar eruptions are incompletely understood yet natural phenomena that occur periodically—often in 11-year cycles—and with varying levels of intensity. They trigger geomagnetic storms—this week’s first one rated at G5, the highest possible—harmful to spacecraft and communications, increased radiation exposure for astronauts and high-flying aircraft, and damage ground-based power grids and subsystems.

Such storms have impaired U.S. communication satellites in the past and blacked-out power stations in Canada. This week’s solar

assault forced some air traffic controllers to alter aircraft flight plans due to disrupted radio transmissions and crippled two Japanese satellites. If CMEs were better understood and more accurately anticipated, steps might then be taken to mitigate their disruptive effects, such as temporarily shutting down satellites and switching off power systems.

SMEI is now beginning to help shed some light on the yet hidden mysteries behind solar storms and their effects on advanced technology.

For its solar reconnaissance mission, SMEI uses first-of-a-kind cameras aboard Coriolis, a DOD Space Test Program spacecraft. Launched just nine months ago, SMEI and its highly sensitive cameras reached orbit just in time to study how such violent storms behave. Built as a proof-of-concept experiment to detect, track and forecast CMEs, SMEI has now detected many of the sun’s radiation-laden eruptions.

“An Earth-bound CME looks like a broad, bright, outward-moving ring with the sun at its center, or a halo,” said AFRL geophysicist David Webb. “Our SMEI cameras have detected two of them within the last week, which were part of a series of major events centered around two huge sunspot groups on the sun,” he added.

SMEI, in a sun-synchronous polar orbit around the Earth, can detect even fast, Earth-bound CMEs up to a day before their arrival, providing valuable early warning of an impending storm unobtainable until now.

79 earn associate’s degrees

The Community College of the Air Force conferred associate’s degrees on 79 TEAM KIRTLAND members in October.

Worldwide, CCAF awarded 7,502 degrees in October.

The college awarded a record 14,347 degrees in 2003.

377th Air Base Wing
Master Sgt. David L. Williams, Aviation Maintenance Technology
Master Sgt. James E. Gildea, Aerospace Historian

377th Mission Support Group
Master Sgt. Donald A. Jenkins, Information Management

377th Contracting Squadron
Airman 1st Class
Rory L. Baumgarten, Contracts Management

377th Comptroller Squadron
Master Sgt. Mary J. Brooks, Financial Management

377th Security Forces Squadron
Staff Sgt. Micah D. Snyder, Criminal Justice
Staff Sgt. Bonnie D. Wilson, Security Administration

377th Logistics Readiness Squadron
Staff Sgt. Joshua L. McDaniel, Transportation

377th Aerospace Medicine Squadron
Staff Sgt. Amy M. Gray, Bioenvironmental Engineering Technology

377th Medical Operations Squadron
Senior Airman Cordtz V. Tuatoo, Mental Health Services

898th Munitions Squadron
Tech. Sgt. Jimmy D. Blankenship, Electronic Systems Technology
Staff Sgt. Michael F. Sterling, Electronic Systems Technology
Master Sgt. Andrew J. Brooks, Criminal Justice

Kirtland AFB NCO Academy
Tech. Sgt. Amy L. Corder, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

58th Maintenance Group
Tech. Sgt. Shawn L. Brock, Avionic Systems Technology

58th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
Airman 1st Class
William J. Allenbaugh III, Aviation Maintenance Technology
Staff Sgt. Eric L. Donnell, Aircraft Systems Maintenance Technology
Senior Airman John T. Duff Jr., Aircraft Systems Maintenance Technology
Airman 1st Class Jason D. Dulon, Avionic Systems Technology
Senior Airman Manuel S. Riojas, Avionic Systems Technology
Staff Sgt. Libby M. Stevenson, Personnel Administration

58th Training Squadron
Tech. Sgt. Thomas W. Bettini, Flight Engineering
Tech. Sgt. Christine Brockinton, Avionic Systems Technology
Master Sgt. Craig J. Coulombe, Aviation Operations
Tech. Sgt. Ronald D. McMillon, Avionic Systems Technology

58th Maintenance Squadron
Staff Sgt. Brian A. Flores, Aircraft Systems Maintenance Technology

58th Maintenance Operations Squadron
Tech. Sgt. Blair E. Diederich, Aviation Maintenance Technology
Tech. Sgt. William T. Pyle, Aircraft Systems Maintenance Technology

58th Operations Support Squadron
Master Sgt. Torrence D. Johnson, Airport Resource Management
Tech. Sgt. Ronald J. Melton, Aviation Operations
Master Sgt. Adrian E. Wineland, Human Resource Management

373rd Training Squadron Detachment 16
Staff Sgt. Nicholas P. Burnett, Avionic Systems Technology
Tech. Sgt. Bryan K. Jackson, Aircraft Systems Maintenance Technology
Staff Sgt. Joseph M. Legato, Aviation Maintenance Technology
Tech. Sgt. Robert M. Liddy Jr., Instructor of Technology and Military Science
Tech. Sgt. Gregory T. Schumacher, Instructor of Technology and Military Science
Tech. Sgt. Noel E. Staton Jr., Aviation Maintenance Technology

Tech. Sgt. Robert J. Thurber, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Air Force Research Laboratory
Tech. Sgt. James A. Cabezas, Electronic Systems Technology
Senior Airman James Spann, Electronic Systems Technology
Master Sgt. Kevin L. Teele, Electronic Systems Technology
Master Sgt. David S. Vega, Criminal Justice

412th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Detachment 2
Master Sgt. Leobardo F. Chavez, Aviation Maintenance Technology
Staff Sgt. John L. Henderson II, Aviation Maintenance Technology
Staff Sgt. Brett A. Kozel, Aerospace Ground Equipment Technology

551st Special Operations Squadron
Tech. Sgt. William H. Clemons Jr., Aviation Operations

Staff Sgt. Vincent A. Depersio, Aviation Operations

Tech. Sgt. Bradley H. Forslund, Flight Engineering

Tech. Sgt. Antonio Garcia Jr., Aviation Operations

Tech. Sgt. Eugene D. Hock II, Aviation Operations, Aviation Maintenance Technology

Tech. Sgt. Richard D. Shore, Aviation Operations

Staff Sgt. Kenneth R. Godfrey, Aircraft Armament Systems Technology

550th Special Operations Squadron
Staff Sgt. Justin M. Day, Aviation Operations

Tech. Sgt. Alice J. Neafus, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Master Sgt. James E. Walker Jr., Aircrew Operations

Staff Sgt. Anthony T. Weiss, Aircraft Armament Systems Technology

Staff Sgt. Matthew M. White, Aviation Operations

Tech. Sgt. Robert E. Fagnant Jr., Aviation Operations

512th Rescue Squadron
Staff Sgt. Daniel D. Morgan, Aerospace Ground Equipment Technology

Master Sgt. Darren T. Waters, Aviation Operations

Tech. Sgt. William T. Hunt Jr., Aviation Maintenance Technology

342nd Training Squadron Detachment 1
Staff Sgt. Nathan J. Cox, Pararescue

Tech. Sgt. Adam R. Getty, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Staff Sgt. Yandall D. Goodwin, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Master Sgt. Kenneth S. Loftis, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Staff Sgt. Brent L. Maney, Pararescue

Staff Sgt. Clinton D. Mattoon, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Tech. Sgt. Darrell R. Mayers, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Staff Sgt. Jeremy D. Miller, Allied Health Sciences, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Staff Sgt. Blain A. Morgan, Pararescue, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Defense Threat Reduction Agency
Master Sgt. Francis E. Jennings, Human Resource Management

Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center
Staff Sgt. Christina Cruz, Human Resource Management

Master Sgt. John A. Daigle, Munitions Systems Technology

Master Sgt. Timoteo Torrez, Information Management

Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center Detachment 3
Master Sgt. Ronald W. Hines, Logistics

Space and Missile Systems Center Detachment 12
Staff Sgt. Terri L. Zuber, Information Systems Technology

150 Fighter Wing
Senior Airman Jeremy George, Maintenance Production Management

705th Exercise Squadron
Tech. Sgt. James L. Nelson, Instructor of Technology and Military Science

Staff Sgt. Jimmy D. Smith, Communications Applications Technology